

OPM 11

OIT 7002-86

8 JAN 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Logistics

STAT FROM:

[redacted]
Deputy Director of Information Technology

STAT SUBJECT: OL Comments on the Corporate Data Program [redacted]

REFERENCE: Your memo, same subj, dtd 18 Nov 85 (OL 4228-85)

1. As you noted in paragraph 1.b of the reference, the CDP by itself cannot solve problems of requirements definition, cost growth, and schedule shortfalls. Our approach is to centralize the management of all new Administration Directorate "corporate" systems within the new Corporate Systems Development Division. Along with this organizational change will come new systems development approaches, including:

a) a focus on incremental, phased delivery of systems.

This will emphasize reducing large, complex programs (such as LIMS and BARS) to a series of smaller and more manageable projects which provide successive improvements in automation.

b) a bias toward commercial (or existing in-house) software. Our joint efforts with your staff to evaluate Management Science America and Cullinet application packages are steps in this direction.

c) an improvement in both software development and customer-oriented tools provided by IDMS/R. Faster application development and increased end-user functionality should result.

d) the use of rapid prototyping to define requirements for the customer interface portions of OIT systems (such as reports, on-line queries, menu and command design, and data representation).

e) a closer partnership with our customers during the development phases. OIT's customers increasingly have both the desire and the skill to participate in many phases of the automation effort: requirements definition, prototyping efforts, program/configuration management, and systems testing/evaluation.

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2. The intent of the CDP is not to alter OL's authority and responsibility to control Agency logistical data (as expressed in reference paragraph 1.c). The Agency's information is one of its most crucial resources. The CDP seeks to make the most of this resource by increasing security, integrity, and accessibility across the various Agency computer systems. The real question is not whether our systems must share data, but how. The primary thrust of the CDP is to accomplish that sharing through common access to an integrated database. When we are successful in doing this the overall complexity will be reduced, rather than increased.

3. Your point about the interdependence of integrated systems increasing the risk that an impact in one program may delay the delivery of another is well taken. Unfortunately this applies in any case, even without a CDP. Changes to today's general ledger will invariably cause changes in the purchasing and contracts software. To the degree that each Agency program relies upon a central database, rather than on internally defined files (such as GIMS EXTRACT tapes), then the impacts of these changes are minimized.

4. Although a centralized database system such as CDP proposes may combine information from a variety of offices we do not anticipate any difficulties with security compartmentation. The underlying database management system, IDMS/R, provides many tools which isolate databases, schemas and subschemas, tasks, and programs. Please be assured of our commitment to work with you to protect the integrity and security of Agency logistical information.

5. I want to express my appreciation to you and your staff for these thoughtful comments on the Corporate Data Program.